



News Release

The New Color of Money: Safer. Smarter. More Secure.

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CONTACT:

Dawn Haley 202/874-3545
Bureau of Engraving and

Printing

Rose Pianalto or Susan Stawick
202/452-2955
Federal Reserve Board

Penny Kozakos 202/530-4887
New Color of Money Media Support

Editor's Note: Since publication of this document, the U.S. government issued a redesigned \$10 note in March 2006 and has modified its plans for future denominations. Please visit the Currency Redesign Timeline page for more information.

**DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY AND FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM
ANNOUNCE DATE OF ISSUE FOR SERIES 2004 \$20 NOTE
Safer, Smarter, More Secure \$20 Note To Begin Circulating October 9
Businesses Prepare Employees and Vending Machines For "The New Color of Money"**

Washington, DC – September 9, 2003 – The first newly redesigned Series 2004 \$20 notes, featuring background colors and improved security features, will be issued October 9, the U.S. government announced today. On the day of issue, the Federal Reserve System will begin distributing the new notes to the public through the nation's commercial banks.

"This is the most secure note the U.S. government has ever produced," said Federal Reserve Board Governor Mark W. Olson. "Its enhanced security will help ensure that our currency continues to represent value, trust and confidence to people all over the world. It will co-circulate with older-design notes, and the public can rest assured that all U.S. notes will continue to be legal tender."

The U.S. government launched a worldwide public education program last May when the new \$20 design was unveiled, to create awareness among the general public and to help banks and businesses prepare for the new \$20 note. A wealth of training and informational materials, highlighted by an interactive demonstration of the bill's security features, is available to download or order through www.moneyfactory.com/newmoney. Since the Treasury's Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) began taking orders last May, more than 7,500 businesses and organizations have ordered training materials.

Today's announcement of the October 9 day of issue will signal to banks and businesses that they should make final preparations for the new notes.

“Our aim is the seamless introduction of the newly redesigned bills,” said BEP Director Tom Ferguson. “To that end, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing has been working with the vending machine industry for over a year to ensure that they have the information they need to make their equipment compatible with the newly redesigned bill by the time it enters circulation on October 9. Additionally, we have been working with businesses and industry associations across the country to provide them with the materials they need to educate their employees on the new \$20 note and its updated security features.”



Counterfeiting: Increasingly Digital

To stay ahead of counterfeiters, the U.S. government plans on introducing new currency designs every 7-10 years. The new design for the \$20 note will be followed by new designs for the \$50 and \$100 notes over the next few years. Redesign of the \$5 and \$10 notes is under consideration, but there are no plans to redesign the \$1 and \$2 notes.

Counterfeiters are increasingly turning to digital methods, as advances in technology make digital counterfeiting of currency easier and cheaper. In 1995, for example, less than 1 percent of counterfeit notes detected in the U.S. was digitally produced. By 2002, that number had grown to nearly 40 percent, according to the U.S. Secret Service.

Yet despite the efforts of counterfeiters, U.S. currency counterfeiting has been kept at low levels, with current estimates putting the level of counterfeit notes in circulation worldwide at about 1-2 notes in every 10,000 genuine notes.

Security Features

The new \$20 design retains three important security features that were first introduced in the late 1990s and are easy for consumers and merchants alike to check:

- *The watermark* – the faint image similar to the large portrait, which is part of the paper itself and is visible from both sides when held up to the light.
- *The security thread* – also visible from both sides when held up to the light, this vertical strip of plastic is embedded in the paper. “USA TWENTY” and a small flag are visible along the thread.
- *The color-shifting ink* – the numeral “20” in the lower-right corner on the face of the note changes from copper to green when the note is tilted. The color shift is more dramatic and easier to see on the new-design notes.

Because these features are difficult for counterfeiters to reproduce well, they often do not try. Counterfeiters are hoping that cash-handlers and the public will not check their money closely.

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The most noticeable difference in the notes is the subtle green, peach and blue colors featured in the background. Different colors will be used for different denominations, which will help everyone – particularly those who are visually impaired – to tell denominations apart.

While consumers should not use color to check the authenticity of their currency (relying instead on the user-friendly security features noted above), color does add complexity to the note, making counterfeiting more difficult.

The new bills are the same size and use the same, although enhanced, portrait of Andrew Jackson on the face of the note and historical vignette of the White House on the back. The redesign also features symbols of freedom – a blue eagle in the background to the left of the portrait, and a metallic green eagle and shield to the right of the portrait in the case of the \$20 note.

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